Theresa Williams September 16, 2010

In “Sculpting Body Ideals: Alis*on Lapper Pregnant* and the Public Display of Disability” Ann Millett-Gallant discusses the importance of integrating disabled and nondisabled works of art to help the public view art in a new perspective; one that creates dialogues and investigations about the ideals and notions of the disabled. Millett-Gallant writes about the controversial sculptural portrait *Alison Lapper Pregnant* by Marc Quinn, and its impact through public display. She believes that the disabled women should be represented and respected as productive and reproductive beings. This sculpture being on public display is an important feature that brings to light many concerns about the representation of the disabled in art and society (474). Millett-Gallant believes that the public viewing of this is essential; she states “Public art, when the most effective, creates dialogues about the role of art in society and whom is included and excluded in the notion of the “public”.” (474).

The sculpture makes a significant statement about disabilities and women and their right to be beautiful and compelling beings. Millett-Gallant notes that Quinn’s creation can be viewed as a new and different version of a hero. She explains that “..it redefines our ideas about heroism and makes a disabled figure a role model, in a positive light.” (475). Viewing this sculpture in a heroic format challenges the public reinterpret the image of a heroic person, and a heroic body. However the author notices that the public makes disabled bodies into lessons, using them as instructional objects for the non-disabled. Their disability is represented as a cautionary take, what it means not to be able-bodied and intact. Millett-Gallant sees the need for public familiarity and exposure to disability in order to abolish the labels and status quo. Millet-Gallant wants the public to observe art and disability in a framework outside their normal conventions, and to perceive it from the perspective of disability. In this way there is an effort to personalize the disabled, and to see them as functioning, beautiful contributors to society.